

Inspire Hope in Your Child.

What you do or say makes a difference to your child. If times are bad and you can say or do something positive, your child will learn that he can do and feel that same way. If you look at the good or hopeful side of things, your child will learn to do it, too.

Why are these activities important?

Parents' actions shape their children's reactions to crises and problems. These activities will help your child to:

- ✓ Talk about his feelings
- ✓ Describe fears he has about today and about the future
- ✓ Know that you believe good things will happen in the future
- ✓ Be more hopeful



AFFIRMATION

Anticipate the good so that you may carry it off.

~ South African Proverb

What you need

- ✓ Poem on page 13

REMEMBER

In tough times, your child looks to you for hope and encouragement.

Activity 1: Hope

This activity uses poetry as a way to start talking with your child about hope. It can be easier to talk about the ideas in a poem, than it is to say what you feel in your own heart. Reading this poem can help your child find words to talk about his feelings. This activity shows that talking about feelings is a good thing.

1. Read the poem on page 13 with your child.
2. Talk about your hopeful, happy, or good feelings.
How do you cheer yourself up when things are hard?
Tell your child how you deal with tough times.
You can use these questions to get things started:
 - ✓ What is this poem about?
 - ✓ How does it make you feel?
 - ✓ What do you look forward to every day? Every week?
 - ✓ What makes you feel that you are important?
 - ✓ When you feel sad or upset, what helps you feel better?
3. Listen to your child's answers. Try to remember the things that make your child feel hopeful. Try to do one or two of these things during the week. For example:
 - ✓ If your child says he feels important when you come to his basketball game, make sure you're at the next game.
 - ✓ If your child likes going to the store with you, go to the store with him a few extra times during the week.
 - ✓ If attention from you makes your child feel special, put a note in his lunch box so he knows you're thinking of him during the day.

HOPE

*By Paula Young Shelton**

Hope ... when all is lost

Hope ... at any cost

Hope ... to hold on tight

Hope ... to get through the night

Hope ... when you are down

Hope ... is freedom's sound

Hope ... to keep you going

Hope ... in the All-Knowing

Hope ... is believing

Hope ... is conceiving

Hope ... is achieving

**Paula Young Shelton is a teacher and member of the National Black Child Development Institute. She has taught children in the United States and Africa.*



What you need

- ✓ Construction paper
- ✓ Glue
- ✓ Crayons, markers, colored pencils
- ✓ Magazines, newspaper

Activity 2: My vision for the future

This activity uses art to create a picture of the future. In hard times, many children give up any hope for a bright future. Older children, most of all, may begin to think that they don't matter. With some help from you, they may begin to see a brighter future.

1. Get two large pieces of construction paper—one for you and one for your child.
2. Use crayons to draw or cut out pictures to show how you think your child's future will look. Have him show how he sees his own future.
3. Show the pictures to each other. Use these questions to start talking about the future:
 - ✓ Do you and your child see good things happening?
 - ✓ How can you make the good things better?



NOTE TO PARENTS

If your child's picture is very sad or violent, go to the **Just for Parents** section of this book to find out where to get help for your child.